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THREE POEMS

By LEE ANDREW WEBER

DREAM, PRAIRIE

Dream, Prairie,
Dream of the day
Your brown body lay along
Beside the creek
With your lips sucking
The trickling earth juice,
When the cottonwood
Shook its leaves
Like a million little mirrors,
When the first herbage
Flamed in spring.
Dream, Prairie, dream.

Hold, Prairie,
Hold your dreams
In your brown arm-pit,
They would steal them.
They would spoil your fresh sweet lips,
Yes, even kill you,
And bury you —
Bury your soft brown body
Under their hard tombs,
Their hard flat pavements.

THE EARTH

I have felt the broad backs of the hills
Under me like giant horses,
And I have ridden, ridden, ridden,
Ridden down the night,
Past the comets,
Past the stars
I have ridden far.

I have felt the rhythm of the earth,
The very veins and arteries, the streams
Beat under me.
I see the grassy fetlocks,
The heaving flanks —
Tough tree, and bony rock
Are ribs of giant horses
Beneath my knees.

They run unbridled,
Toss and throw their manes about —
The great trees toss.
The vibrant earth whinnies and snorts,
And I exult.
The wind has beaten laughter
Into me.
The huge, old hill-horses
Lift me up and up —

The hills are under me.

NIGHT ON THE PRAIRIE

The earth is a bronze bell swinging.

It is night.

All the insects have come

With their banjo-throats humming.

The earth vibrates,

The hills are trembling.

"Twang-wang,"

Down the rows of corn

Runs the sound.

It is the corn-leaves

And the seas of wheat

That you hear sighing.

The locust drones,

And shrill cries

Rise from the mounds

Of the prairie-dog town.

The earth hums,

As bell-metal hums.

The hills are drumming

Dim, low notes.

In my heart the undersong

Never falters.

The Bellman pulls the rope again —

The earth is a bronze bell swinging.

TWO POEMS

By RAYMOND KNISTER

DOG AND CAT

He sees my neighbor's cat
As sedately she walks in the garden.
He bounds toward her,
But she, certain of the fence,
Erects herself
And her fur,
Backing sidelong a little
With ear-laid hauteur:
I don't believe we've met before!

But he,
Remembering the fence now,
Merely wished to look through
At the flowers.
He does not look at her.
He scrubs the turf with his hind feet
Shooting forth grass-roots behind him,
Barks at a passing truck,
And comes home
Gallantly,
Tail in air.

MARTYRDOM

Brown leaves are hurried
(Recalcitrant swiftness!)
For all their clutching
Of grass and stones.
Lie and moulder,
Soiled in rain-pools of yesterday.

Others happier,
Far more happy,
Winged suddenly,
High lifted,
Crucified on the wires,
Swing and writhe
Transfixed on thorns
In immeasurable pain,
Immeasurable ecstasy.

TWO POEMS

By ALICE H. CREW

SONG

Oh, I would sing a lay to you,
Though I've not much to say to you,
Save that the sky and bay are blue,
And hills are green again.

But just because the spring has come,
As myriad springs have always come,
A voice that winter-long was dumb
Must break in song again.

But you who like the measured line
Will find but faulty feet in mine, —
So careless that at every sign
Of spring they stray again.

Still, I will sing my lay to you,
For walking Spring's Highway, you, too,
Have feet, methinks, that stray with you,
When hills are green again!

LEST THERE BE ONE WHO WALKS IN GRIEF

Because the day was fair to me,
And life was full, and I was free,
I tried to stop the wheel of time
And catch the hours, as endlessly
They onward slipped to close the day;
For I would hold life's gaiety
Till even joy had wearied me.

And then I saw one who had lived
The long night through with grief and pain,
One who had lost what even Time
Could not restore to him again.

Now I would have no joy of mine
Hold back a day, however bright,
Lest there be one who walks with grief,
To whom my day is blackest night.

TWO POEMS OF APRIL

By ANNICE CALLAND

IN APRIL

April has come
To the wild plum tree,
And April has come
To the sea.

Sweet is the mingling
Of sea and shore,
And sweet is life
As never before.

Oh, I can never
Believe in death
While April is here
And I feel her breath.

LOST APRILS

April is coming
With feet buried deep
In jade-green waves
Like the flood tide's sweep.

Melted fire opals
Are in her hair;
Bud and blossom
Everywhere.

One who died young
For years has lain
Where falls the tender
April rain.

Violets are growing
Over her breast,
Among them a veery
Has builded her nest.

Oh, that were better
Than acting a part
With lost white Aprils
In the heart!

THE THEFT

By HAROLD LEWIS COOK

*His body was moved yesterday from the graveyard and
interred within the church. . . .* News Item.

He who lay so fast asleep in wonder,
Lay so quiet in his holy bed,
Will his sleep be sweeter buried under
Priests and laymen chaunting o'er his head?
He was still, past any man's believing;
There was none so steeped in dream as he.
Round his limbs the meadow grass was weaving
Raiment kings would envy could they see.

He will never feel the Spring awaken,
Feel the blossoms piercing through his side,
Feel the rain from windy aspens shaken:
Housed in sunless stone he must abide,
Flower of dreaming broken, flower of sleep,
Torn from peace he might no longer keep.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

ANNICE CALLAND is a pen name. The poems come to us from Haiti.

HAROLD LEWIS COOK was educated at Union College and at Cambridge University, England. He is at present an instructor at Northwestern University. His poems have been published in many of the leading American and English periodicals.

ALICE HARGRAVE CREW is a laboratory technician, holding degrees in Chemistry from the Universities of Wisconsin and California. Her home is in Rockford, Illinois, at present.

RAYMOND KNISTER's work, in both poetry and prose, has appeared in former issues of THE MIDLAND. He is at present on a farm near Blenheim, Ontario, Canada — his home.

LEE ANDREW WEBER is a young Omaha poet whom THE MIDLAND is glad to introduce. He is of pioneer lineage, his grandfather having been a contractor during the building of the Union Pacific Railroad.

